

Steering Committee Notes
August 16, 2005

Steering Committee Members Present: Joe Plankis, Bob Horkay, Jim Kent, Larry Snapp, Jack Bonham, John Boyer, Tom Mullins, Karen Newberry, Jen Smith, Teresa Otis-Skelton, Gloria Del Greco and Dave Mueller

Others Present: Greg Dale, Hank Arszman, Mark Werner, Bob McColgin, William McColgin, Jeff Lazar, Don Day, Bill Spaulding, Robert Waller, Duane Lutz, Steve Meyer, Rene and Gene Duran, Mic Mead, Dora Wainwright, Ann Enderle, Rick Combs, Phyllis Stockhouse, Jerry Layton, Rita Alexander, John and Judith Lawburg, Jeanette Paris, Ida Grinstead, Paul Littrell, Brian Stumpf, Wilfred Bacon, Father Kevin Haines, Charles Bellinger, Kevin Buchheit, Al Salzman, Tom Higgins, Carrie Cason, Kevin Todd and Ann Cavaluzzi.

The meeting started at 7:05pm.

Joe Plankis welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reviewed the agenda and introduced Kevin Buchheit, the Town of Westfield, Director of Community Development, and Greg Dale, the town's consultant.

Greg Dale introduced the comprehensive planning and subcommittee process. Greg explained that a comprehensive plan is a 20 year vision of Washington Township. The plan will guide physical development and growth of the community. There are other tools that help implement the comprehensive plan such as zoning and subdivision regulations, parks plan, thoroughfare plan etc. This process does not involve writing these regulations. A comprehensive plan is not an engineering study. The people in the front of the room are the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is not a decision making body. They have been put in charge of the comprehensive planning process by the Advisory Plan Commission. Under Indiana law, the Advisory Plan Commission is in charge of long range planning projects. The APC will recommend will the plan to Town Council who will eventually adopt it. The subcommittees are responsible for looking at the planning issues in the eight geographic subareas defined on the map.

Kevin Buchheit presented the Demand and Capacity Analysis. This presentation can be found on the town's website.

Dave Mueller: Is it realistic for us to plan for twenty years out. Would ten or fifteen years work better?

Kevin Buchheit: This process should look at township build out, and the growth projections.

Greg Dale: The plan is a 20 year vision. Some communities do an annual review of their comprehensive plan. Every five years you should do substantial revisions.

Gloria Del Greco: Were remodels included in the building permit projection?

Kevin Buchheit: No, just brand new residences.

Jack Bonham: Should we try to control Westfield's size?

Greg Dale: Absolutely, but we need to address how we should grow.

Karen Newberry: Is it common to include golf courses in Parks and Open Space?

Greg Dale: Not necessarily. It depends on the community. Some communities include them in their park space. Westfield didn't include the school ballfields in their parkland calculations.

Gloria Del Greco: Should we include subdivision common areas under parks and recreation land, considering they are only meant for residents of that subdivision?

Kevin Buchheit: Yes, They are a part of the trail system.

Cindy Spoljaric: I would like to see information on the amount of buildable vacant land, employment ratios, square footages of industrial and commercial space, the average cost of housing by type etc.

Kevin Buchheit: Please send me a list of you questions, and we will try to get answers for them.

Mic Mead: It looks like we are a bedroom community. That means housing is a viable business here. According to our projection in the 2000 plan and the census population data we are right on target population wise.

Ginny Kelleher: Can we have suggestions for good land use balance?

Kevin Buchheit: We will be getting that too you.

Joe Plankis: School data will be forthcoming. I have a meeting with Dr. Keen.

Citizen: Are there other towns we can to look for examples?

Kevin Buchheit: Yes they are, and we have looked at some of them. Our consultants have a wealth of information and examples.

Greg Dale: We want to hear from you. What should this community look like?

Greg Dale presented the Subcommittee process via PowerPoint.

Ginny Kelleher: Can we have a copy of your PowerPoint? Can we also receive examples of policy plans without maps?

Greg Dale: The PowerPoint will be on the web. We discussed this issue before. We are looking at a plan that is policy drive not map driven. We aren't saying that the plan won't have any maps, it just won't be parcel specific. There will be issues that conflict between the subcommittees. The steering committee will need to resolve those issues. The consultants will identify those issues.

Jack Bonham: How do we get locations where specific land uses go without a parcel map?

Greg Dale: Policies and maps can do that. Subcommittees will help us write rules for development.

Mic Mead: You didn't mention density.

Greg dale: You shouldn't think about density alone. Think about it in context with other issues, for example, character of neighborhoods.

Citizen: How can we stay involved after the subcommittee process is over?

Greg Dale: These steering committee meetings are public. Go to them and have your voice heard.

Kevin Buchheit: The website will be the common area for publicity notices and information.

Teresa Otis-Skelton: Staff will be a constant in this process.

Greg dale: The staff also is a good resource.

Ginny Kelleher: Where is the line between policy and regulation? When does regulation become an ordinance?

Kevin Buchheit: The consultants will be key in determining that.

Greg Dale: Look at the Franklin TN. example. That is a good example of a policy plan.

Joe Plankis: Can the Franklin TN example be emailed to the steering committee, planning commission and town council?

Kevin Buchheit: Yes.

Jen Smith: Can we have an example locally?

Citizen: Doesn't the plan start on an agreed upon rate of growth?

Greg Dale: Not necessarily. This is a community based plan

Citizen: Is there any state agency to provide us guidance to meet state codes?

Kevin Buchheit: No there is not. There used to be a state planning office but not any more. Planning is done on the local level. There are really no agencies to help us.

Gloria Del Greco: Not all emails go through. You may need to make some hard copies.

Kevin Buchheit: We can make resources available at the library.

Citizen: Is the plan meant to tell where things go in the future?

Greg Dale: Yes.

Jen Smith: How can we use the consultants during the subcommittee process?

Greg dale: Via staff. Don't be afraid to utilize the staff. You can email me if you have any big issues.

Jen Smith: Knitting things together, who makes those tough decisions?

Greg Dale: You're on the steering committee. It is the job of the steering committee to resolve those problems. It is not outside the realm of possibility to bring the subcommittees back to help solve an item.

The subcommittees broke out and developed a schedule of when they were going to meet.

The meeting ended at 9:30 PM.

